

Capsule Summary  
SM-578  
Abell/Briscoe House  
Leonardtown  
Private

c. 1901

The Abell/Briscoe House, constructed c. 1901, represents a good example of a Queen Anne-style dwelling located on Washington Street in Leonardtown, Maryland. Probably erected during the ownership of George C. Abell who purchased this 2.3 acre tract called "Darley" on December 26, 1900, the house epitomizes the diversity in style and architecture form of the larger homes built along North Washington Street in the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century. Dwellings such as the nearby W.W. Sawyer House (SM-365), Large Frame House (SM-334), Long House (SM-333), Drury/Saunders's House (SM-540), and 81 Washington Street (SM-332) feature a wide variety of stylistic and decorative elements from the late-Victorian period. A mansard roof, scroll sawn brackets and turned porch posts, hipped roofs, turrets, and fishscale siding are all features found on homes in this area of Leonardtown. While the Abell/Briscoe House definitely conforms to the trendy architectural design of the houses surrounding it, the dwelling also has a traditional, two story, rear kitchen ell with a rear service stair to an upstairs bedroom that served as living space for domestic servants.

While "Darley" was owned by Mary E. Camalier from 1858-1900, the present dwelling was not constructed until c. 1901 during the ownership of George C. Abell. In 1917, the dwelling was sold by heirs of George C. Abell to John J. and Lillian J. Duke. The Duke's then sold the property to Judge John H.T. Briscoe in 1921 who owned the property until 1957. While the house has been covered with vinyl siding, much of the house's original decorative details, overall form, fenestration, and massing, have been preserved.

SM-578, Abell-Briscoe House  
St. Mary's County  
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Industrial-Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Historic Period Theme:	Architecture

Resource Type

Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Town, Suburban
Historic Function and Use:	Dwelling
Known Design Source:	None

**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-578

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Abell/Briscoe House

**2. Location**

street & number 22960 Washington Street

☐ not for publication

city, town Leonardtown

☐ vicinity of

congressional district 3

state Maryland

county St. Mary's

TM-127, P-480

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Ruth W. Proffitt

street & number PO Box 113

telephone no.: 301-475-5029

city, town Leonardtown

state and zip code Maryland 20650

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse

liber EWA 645

street & number

folio 254

city, town Leonardtown

state Md

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title

date

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

## 7. Description

Survey No. SM-578

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The Abell/Briscoe House is located approximately 0.1 miles north from the intersection of Maryland Route 5 and Washington Street in Leonardtown, Maryland. The dwelling is situated on an east-west axis and is approached via a dirt driveway that creates a U-shape on the west side of the 2.36 acre tract. The house is bounded on the west by Washington Avenue, on the south by the Charles County Community College, to the east by a small stream and wooded tract, and to the north by the W. W. Sawyer House (SM-365).

The Abell/Briscoe House is a two-story, three bay, Queen-Anne style, frame dwelling with a gable roof and a two story, rear kitchen ell. Constructed in the 1900s, the house is constructed on a brick foundation that on two sides has been covered over by a modern brick veneer. The walls are sheathed with vinyl siding and the roof covered with asphalt shingles. The gable roof is pierced by a large interior brick chimney.

The three, symmetrically placed first floor bays of the south or primary elevation is shaded on the first floor by a modern porch supported by four square, plain columns or posts. The three first floor bays consist of a modern fifteen light door and two, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows (All of the windows of the house have been replaced with modern one-over-one sash unless otherwise noted.). The second floor is pierced by three windows while the attic story is lit by a paired set of windows. This elevation also features the side of the rear ell and a one story modern addition. The one story addition is pierced by three windows. With the first floor of the ell now obscured by the modern addition, the second floor of the ell is pierced by one window.

The east elevation consists of the gable end of the ell, the side of the one story modern addition, and the side of the main block. The one story addition is pierced by a centrally located vinyl covered door that is flanked on either side by one window. A modern deck or porch permits access to this door. The second floor of the main block is pierced by one window. The gable end of the ell is pierced on the first floor by a glazed flower box. To the north of the box is an exterior end brick chimney flue. This elevation also features a small gable roof enclosure that permits access to the basement.

The north elevation features the side of the ell and the gable end of the main block. The ell features a shed roof projection that enclosed an earlier porch space. The projection, however, did not enclose a modern door. The enclosed section is pierced by one window on the north side a small window on the east side. The second floor of the ell is pierced by two windows. The main block is pierced by three windows on the first and second floors. The attic story is lit by a single window.

The west elevation is pierced on the first floor by a door and a window. The eight panel door is shaded by a classically inspired portico. The portico features paired square columns with trim that suggests a base and capital. The portico also features an open bed pediment and a dentilated cornice. The second floor is pierced by two windows and the attic story is lit by one window with a semicircular crown that is actually situated in the middle of a wide cross-gable projection from the roof.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. SM-578

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

### Specific dates

### Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Abell/Briscoe House, constructed c. 1901, represents a good example of a Queen-Anne-style dwelling located on Washington Street in Leonardtown, Maryland. Probably erected during the ownership of George C. Abell, the house epitomizes the diversity in style and architectural form of the larger homes built along North Washington Street in the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century. Dwellings such as the nearby W. W. Sawyer house (SM-365), Large Frame House (SM-334), Long House (SM-333), Drury/Saunders House (SM-540), and 81 Washington Street (SM-332) feature a wide variety of stylistic and decorative elements from the late-Victorian period. A mansard roof, scroll sawn brackets and turned porch posts, hipped roofs, turrets, and fishscale siding are all features found on homes in this area of Leonardtown. While the Abell/Briscoe House definitely conforms to the trendy architectural design of the houses surrounding it, the dwelling also has a traditional, two story, rear kitchen ell with a rear service stair and domestic servant quarters.

In 1917, the dwelling was sold by heirs of George C. Abell to John J. and Lillian J. Duke. The Duke's then sold the property to Judge John H. T. Briscoe in 1921 who owned the property until 1957. While the house has been covered with vinyl siding, much of the house's original decorative details and form, such as the fenestration, massing, and interior decoration, remain intact.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-578

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.36 acresQuadrangle name Leonardtown, MdQuadrangle scale 1:24 000UTM References do NOT complete UTM referencesA 

Zone	Easting	Northing

B 

Zone	Easting	Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Same as per deed description.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyororganization St. Mary's County Dept. of Planning and Zoning date 5-19-97street & number 22740 Washington Street telephone 301-475-4662city or town Leonardtown state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600

— SM-578, Abell/Briscoe House  
St. Mary's County  
7.1 Description

The interior of the main block consists of a side-passage plan with a pair of parlors. The stair passage features a stair with a turned newel. The door and window architraves are decorated with corner blocks with paterae. The ell still functions as the kitchen and features a service stair to the second floor. The second floor was not investigated.

The property also features an early twentieth century two bay, frame carriage house. The building is sheathed with clapboard fastened to the frame with wire nails. The clapboard is on three sides of the building. The building's gable roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. On the south elevation the building features two carriage bays and a central storage area. A small loft lies directly above the center storage area.

SM-578, Abell/Briscoe House  
St. Mary's County  
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber EWA 645, Folio 254

Grantee: Ruth W. Proffitt

Grantor: Larry Stephen Olson

Date: January 7, 1992

Notes: The tract contains approximately 3 acres and is called "Darley."

Reference: Liber MRB 58, Folio 378

Grantee: Larry Stephen Olson

Grantor: George S. and Catherine Barnes, personal representative of J. Compton Swann

Date: November 8, 1979

Reference: Liber 68, Folio 123

Grantee: J. Compton and Dorothy Edson Swann

Grantor: John H. T. Briscoe

Date: March 20, 1957

Reference: Liber EBA 19, Folio 446

Grantee: John H. T. Briscoe

Grantor: John J. and Lillian J. Duke

Date: March 4, 1921

Notes: Briscoe purchased the 3 acre tract for \$ 2000.

Reference: Liber EBA 16, Folio 313

Grantee: John J. and Lillian J. Duke

Grantor: George J. McCully, trustee

Date: July 27, 1917

Notes: The property is sold at a private sale for \$ 1000. In Circuit Court case 1271 NE, it was agreed between Joseph Walter and Mary Estelle Abell and Mary A. Abell, adult and John Clinton Abell, Elizabeth Camille Abell and Marion Catherine Abell, infants that the property be sold to the Duke's. It is noted that the property is improved by a "dwelling house and outbuildings [which also included a barn and stable] which had been conveyed to him [George C. Abell], in his lifetime, by deed of George A. Camalier..."

Reference: Liber EBA 1, Folio 498

Grantee: George C. Abell

Grantor: George A. and Rena Camalier, John V. Camalier, Thomas M. and Pattie Camalier, B. H. and Nellie Camalier, Thomas and Maggie Camalier, and Enoch and Katie M. Abell--heirs of Mary E. Camalier

Date: December 26, 1900

Notes: Mary E. Camalier died seized and possessed and as a result her heirs sold the property. Apparently Mary E. Camalier purchased the property from Benjamin Gwinn Harris about 1858 but did not obtain a deed from him providing her legal title to the property.











SN-548

A bell-Briscoe house

St. Mary's County

Fuller House

May 1997

MI SRFO

E + N elevations

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